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POLITICAL

1. Election date

By a vote of 40 to 7, Congress set the presidential election for October 20, the date it had fixed earlier for congressional elections. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: The short campaign period undoubtedly favors the MDN candidate, as the opposition claimed, but MDN's claim that the short period favors calm and stability in the country is also valid. Even those who opposed the early date most strongly have not been able to deny that there was ample time before President Castillo's assassination for the organization of any political party with a valid reason for being. (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)

2. Parties and Candidates

To date there are 14 or more political groups active in the presidential campaign. Many are embryonic. Only three parties as yet are legally registered and therefore capable of filing a candidate: MDN, PCA, and DCG. Two of these, MDN and PCA, as well as the Partido Liberal (registration pending), plus several smaller parties, have joined forces under the name Unión Patriótica Anticomunista in support of Ortiz Passarelli. He will probably also be the DCG candidate. Strongest opposition to Ortiz to date is General Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes, who returned to Guatemala September 1 and who is the candidate of the still unregistered Partido Reconciliación Democrática Nacional (Redención). Other groups are in varying stages of organization; some have announced candidates, some have not. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: Both Ortiz and Ydígoras are anti-communist and both are attempting to associate themselves with the person and program of President Castillo. Ydígoras begins the campaign better known and with a stronger personal following; Ortiz has better organizational and financial support, although Embassy Caracas reported Ydígoras' presence in Venezuela last week to solicit aid (presumably financial) and indicated the likelihood that he would approach Trujillo.

Ydígoras' enemies paint him as potential dictator (his rank of General is relic of Ubico days), but big crowd at airport to meet him Sunday was significant, particularly because of large number who arrived in own automobiles, indicative of substantial middle and upper class support which he commands. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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3. Partido Revolucionario

Partido Revolucionario (Weeka No. 35) requested Government to provide it with list of Guatemalan communists to permit it to guard against infiltration. Assistant Director of National Security Carlos Lemus replied that the Government was precluded by law from providing such a list. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: This leftist group no doubt has more than the 5,000 signatures required for registration, but Electoral Board will probably attempt to find cause why party should not be registered. Party eschewed communism in first manifesto and now undertakes prevent infiltration. There is no evidence that leader and spokesman Eduardo Castillo Arriola is communist, but fact remains that several organizers were associated with Arévalo-Arbenz regimes. As Government undoubtedly realizes, party could provide ready front for communist re-infiltration. Assuming immediate application for registration and public pressure on behalf of party, Electoral Board need delay only three weeks to pass deadline for filing candidates. (CONFIDENTIAL)

4. ORIT Editorial Criticizes Castillo

The August issue of the ORIT publication Mundo del Trabajo Libre carried an editorial on the assassination of President Castillo which aligned the organization with the strong critics of his regime. It was also severely critical of the present provisional Government. (UNCLASSIFIED)

Comment: Andrew McLellan, ORIT Central American representative, disavowed the editorial and asked for official ORIT retraction. ORIT unable to retract but reportedly sent Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Labor satisfying messages assuring continued support Castillo labor policies, which present Government has undertaken to carry on. McLellan says message well received and likely sustain ORIT influence, which editorial tended to undermine. (CONFIDENTIAL)

MILITARY

Negative.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

1. Press Urges Campaign Moderation

In an editorial on heated argument in Congress over date for elections, Prensa Libre stated debate aroused public attention because it was unusual in Guatemala, added that vigorous exchanges of this kind are salutary, kept within bounds. Both Prensa Libre and El Imparcial have deplored physical violence (breaking of windows in Vielgoras' headquarters, stoning of Ortiz automobiles Sunday in

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San Marcos, stoning of Volkswagen automobiles same date in Guatemala City) and have urged party leaders to set example and to demand restraint in speech and action on part of followers. (UNCLASSIFIED)

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